

A large heart shape is drawn on a window pane covered in condensation. The background behind the window shows a bright sunset or sunrise with a gradient from blue at the top to orange and yellow at the bottom.

CELL OUTLINES

NURTURE DISCIPLES OF JESUS

These Cell Outlines are written by Youth and Children's Ministries. They are available every month from our website. For more information and other Cell resources, visit [salvationarmy.org.uk/children-and-youth-resources](https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/children-and-youth-resources)

OVERVIEW

This month we are exploring the third mission priority for The Salvation Army in the UK.

NURTURE DISCIPLES OF JESUS

The future of The Salvation Army depends on nurturing current and future generations of Christian disciples who, filled by the Holy Spirit, share the Good News of Jesus, resulting in more disciples. Like athletes, Christian disciples need to practise staying fit for God's demanding mission. Habits such as prayer, Bible reading, corporate worship, music, tithing and helping others are vital. The Salvation Army believes being a disciple of Jesus and experiencing the blessing of holiness is the way to experience fullness of life.

SESSION ONE: WHAT IS A DISCIPLE?

Within the Church we hear the word 'disciple' used a lot, but how often do we stop to consider what it means? What did it mean in its first-century context and how has that changed today? In this session we'll consider these questions and start to explore The Salvation Army's mission priority to 'nurture disciples of Jesus'.

SESSION TWO: A DISCIPLE'S PURPOSE

In Session Two we're exploring the first sentence of 'Nurture Disciples of Jesus' mission priority. We'll consider what it means to share the Good News with others and disciple others through the power of the Holy Spirit. We'll reflect on our personal calling to help others learn more about Jesus and pray for our church and denomination as we continue to nurture disciples.

SESSION THREE: GOD'S DEMANDING MISSION

In this session we are looking at the resurrection story of Easter and exploring the disciples' response to God's demanding mission. As disciples of Jesus ourselves, we'll learn from their mistakes and take courage in their transformation from fear to faith.

SESSION FOUR: GOOD HABITS

In Session Four we'll continue to explore the 'Nurture Disciples of Jesus' mission priority and what it means for us as followers of Jesus. The mission priority mentions a number of habits we can develop as part of our discipleship journey and today we will look at them in more detail.

SESSION FIVE: NURTURE DISCIPLES OF JESUS

Our final session pulls together everything we have discovered as we have delved into the 'Nurture Disciples of Jesus' mission priority. Today we'll explore how Christians, like athletes, can stay fit for God's demanding mission and draw together our thoughts from the past four sessions.

Any text in italics represents notes for the leader. It gives more context around the Scripture/activity. You may choose to share verbatim, summarise, or not share at all.






WHAT IS A DISCIPLE?

Within the Church we hear the word 'disciple' used a lot, but how often do we stop to consider what it means? What did it mean in its first-century context and how has that changed today? In this session we'll consider these questions and start to explore The Salvation Army's mission priority to 'nurture disciples of Jesus'.

WELCOME

Today we'll discover that discipleship is all about learning, but effective learning often involves an inspiring teacher.

Discuss the following questions together.

-  Which teacher most inspires/d you?
-  Why have they had (do they have) such an impact in your life?
-  What makes a brilliant teacher?
-  Turning the question around, what makes a brilliant learner?
-  Think about something you are learning to do at the moment. How do you compare to the group's description of what makes a brilliant learner?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Name as many films as you can with inspiring teachers.

- * Here are some examples, have you seen any of them?

Dead Poets Society

Freedom Writers

Sister Act 1 & 2

School of Rock

Karate Kid

Matilda

Good Will Hunting

WORD

- * What is a disciple?

Ask the group to jot down their answer to this question and then share the responses.

The Cambridge dictionary defines a disciple as 'a person who believes in the ideas and principles of someone famous and tries to live the way that person does or did'.

- * How does this definition compare to the ones your group came up with?

“The standard lexicon for New Testament Greek defines the word 'disciple' (*mathētēs*) as 'one who engages in learning through instruction from another, pupil, apprentice' (BDAG, 3rd ed, 609). At its most basic meaning, the word disciple means learner.”

— JACOB GERBER




- * How does this definition compare to the ones you have discussed so far?

In the first-century context, discipleship was all about learning. Watch the clip and jot down what you discover about the original process involved in becoming a disciple.



 **Discipleship in the First Century (6 min 44 sec)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b0FrGxecUY>

In the clip, discipleship is described as the apex of the Jewish education system.




-  What would you be expected to know prior to following a rabbi?
-  Are any of you up for the challenge of learning the first five books of the Old Testament? Do you think you could have managed it by the age of 12?
-  What kind of process did people go through to qualify for a place as a disciple?

 **Read Matthew 4:18-22.**

-  What process did Simon (Peter), Andrew, James and John go through to become disciples of Jesus?
-  How did it differ from the traditional selection process for a disciple in the first century?

Discipleship is not a one-time deal. From that day onward, the disciples spent their days following Jesus, watching his every move carefully and listening to his teaching. When we become disciples of Jesus, we are to spend every moment of our lives learning how to become more like him.

As we have already mentioned, the original meaning of disciple is 'learner'.

-  How does this change your understanding of what it means to be a disciple?
-  What impact could this understanding have on your everyday life as a disciple of Jesus?
-  What is your response to the following quote?

“ ‘A disciple is a learner, a student, an apprentice – a practitioner ... Disciples of Jesus are people who do not just profess certain views as their own but apply their growing understanding of life in the Kingdom of Heaven to every aspect of their life on earth.’

— DALLAS WILLARD

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

One of the traditions of Jewish teaching was to ensure that all opinions were considered before a productive discussion around a topic could begin. With that in mind, here are some contrasting opinions on discipleship.

Discuss them as a group.

“ ‘Jesus was alright, but his disciples were thick and ordinary. It’s them twisting it that ruins it for me.’

— JOHN LENNON

“ ‘The true teacher defends his pupils against his own personal influence. He inspires self-trust. He guides their eyes from himself to the spirit that quickens him. He will have no disciples.’

— AMOS BRONSON ALCOTT





“ ‘Disciples be damned. It’s not interesting. It’s only the masters that matter. Those who create.’

— PABLO PICASSO

WORSHIP

There is some debate about the historical accuracy regarding the idea of 'being covered in the dust of your rabbi', but it is a useful metaphor for us to imagine the intimacy of following Jesus. It helps us to think about our proximity to Jesus in everyday life.

As you listen to the music, reflect on what it means to be a disciple and consider these questions:


-  Who are you learning from?
-  Who occupies your time and focus?
-  Using the idea of being 'covered in the dust of your rabbi', whose dust are you covered in? Is it Jesus?
-  Are you living as a disciple of Jesus?

 **Be Like Jesus – TransMission – Topic (5 min 45 sec)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNun264vNIA>

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Reflect on the words of the well-known Salvation Army chorus.

-  What do you think General John Gowans is trying to convey about a life of discipleship?

**To be like Jesus!
This hope possesses me,
In every thought and deed,
This is my aim, my creed;
To be like Jesus!
This hope possesses me,
His Spirit helping me,
Like him I'll be.**

— JOHN GOWANS SASB 328

WITNESS

Last month we explored what it means to 'Serve others without discrimination'. In order to do this, we spent time considering The Salvation Army's mission priority and exploring its meaning. This month we are going to use the same process to think about the 'Nurture Disciples of Jesus' mission priority.

This activity can be done in a number of ways depending on whether you are meeting in person or online. Either way, each member of the group will need a copy of the mission priority.

Read through the statement a couple of times.

NURTURE DISCIPLES OF JESUS

The future of The Salvation Army depends on nurturing current and future generations of Christian disciples who, filled by the Holy Spirit, share the Good News of Jesus, resulting in more disciples. Like athletes, Christian disciples need to practise staying fit for God's demanding mission. Habits such as prayer, Bible reading, corporate worship, music, tithing and helping others are vital. The Salvation Army believes being a disciple of Jesus and experiencing the blessing of holiness is the way to experience fullness of life.

Generate questions around this statement and highlight words that require clarification. At the end of the four sessions, these questions will be revisited for further discussion.

Example questions:

- 🗨️ What do we mean by discipleship?
- 🗨️ How is 'disciple' defined in this mission priority?
- 🗨️ What does the phrase 'fullness of life' mean?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Discuss the following quote in light of the 'Nurture Disciples of Jesus' mission priority.

“The church exists for nothing else but to draw men into Christ, to make them little Christs. If they are not doing that, all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, sermons, even the Bible itself, are simply a waste of time. God became man for no other purpose.”

— C.S. LEWIS

A DISCIPLE'S PURPOSE

In Session Two we're exploring the first sentence of the 'Nurture Disciples' mission priority. We'll consider what it means to share the Good News with others and disciple others through the power of the Holy Spirit. We'll reflect on our personal calling to help others learn more about Jesus and pray for our church and denomination as they continue to nurture disciples.

WELCOME

Watch the clip and have a go at this Countdown maths round from way back in 1997.

The group will need a pen and paper to have a go at the maths round.

When the clip is over, discuss the contestants' way of solving the maths problem and the reaction of those watching.

 **Countdown – The Most Extraordinary Numbers Game Ever? (4 min 9 sec)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pfa3MHLLSWI>


Our mission priority for today talks about the way we need to make more disciples, multiplying as followers of Jesus. Just like the Countdown maths problem, this can appear simple on paper(!) but can feel a lot more complex in reality.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

 How do you think the other contestant felt watching the elaborate way the problem was solved?


WORD


In February's sessions we looked at the mission priority 'Share the Good News' exploring the life of Jesus and what we mean by 'Good News'. Today the theme of sharing the Good News of Jesus returns again within the third mission priority, 'Nurture Disciples of Jesus'.

 To recap from the last session, how would you describe a disciple?

Read the section of the 'Nurture Disciples of Jesus' mission priority below.

'The future of The Salvation Army depends on nurturing current and future generations of Christian disciples who, filled by the Holy Spirit, share the Good News of Jesus, resulting in more disciples.'

 According to this mission priority, what is the main purpose of a disciple?

 In the last session we looked at the first-century definition of a disciple as a learner. How does this definition impact our understanding of the 'Nurture Disciples of Jesus' mission priority? It might help to read the sentence and replace the phrase 'Christian disciples' with 'Christian learners'.

 Do you think we ever stop learning as disciples? Explain your thoughts.

Part of the learning process is grappling with new ideas and trying to understand them. The disciples regularly misunderstood Jesus. Throughout Mark 4, Jesus used several parables to describe the Kingdom of God.

Watch the clip that takes us through Mark Chapter 4.

 **Gospel of Mark Chapter 4 (5 min 42 sec)**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G_x_XugKc2E

 What evidence is there that the disciples are struggling to understand the message of Jesus and who he is?

- 🗨️ In what ways do you relate to the experience of the disciples in Mark 4 (particularly when they are in the middle of the storm)?

Jesus knew that the disciples didn't fully understand who he was or what he was trying to say, but he still sent them out to spread the Good News. They were still learning!

Either read Mark 6:6b-13 or watch the clip below from 55 seconds to 1 min 30 secs.

- 📺 **Gospel of Mark 6**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AkBH0pq1oaA>

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, given to the disciples by Jesus, they were able to minister to others even though they still had so much to learn.

- 🗨️ How does this news encourage you as a disciple of Jesus?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

The mission priority describes how we share the Good News of Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

- 🗨️ What do you think that means?

Watch this clip about the Holy Spirit and see if it helps your understanding of this mission priority.

- 📺 **Holy Spirit – Bible Project (4 min 10 sec)**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oNNZO9i1Gjc>

WITNESS

The first-century meaning of the word 'disciple' was learner or student. So if we are discipling others, then we are helping them to learn more about God and grow in their faith. When we put it like that, discipling others sounds less intimidating. God calls us to make disciples – it's not optional!

- 🗨️ In what ways is The Salvation Army a community of Christian learners (disciples)? How could we grow in this area?

- 🗨️ In what ways do we help each other to learn?

We've considered how The Salvation Army nurtures disciples, but each one of us is called to make disciples.

- 🗨️ What kind of excuses do we use to avoid discipling others?

Examples – We don't know enough, we're busy, we've too much going on just now, we're an introvert.

- 🗨️ If discipling others involves helping others to learn more about Jesus, then how could we help someone do that?

- 🗨️ It's time to be specific. Think about the people you see throughout your week. Who could you nurture and disciple?

- 🗨️ What is your response to the following quote?

“**‘God made you the way you are; he has provided and will continue to provide you with everything you need to accomplish the task. Jesus commands you to look at the people around you and start making them into disciples. Obviously, only God can change people’s hearts and make them want to become followers. We just have to be obedient in making the effort to teach them, even though we still have plenty to learn ourselves.’**

— FRANCIS CHAN

Let's get specific!

Write down a specific goal for the following month that will take you a step closer to helping someone learn more about Jesus.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

We have watched this clip in a previous session (a few months ago) but it's worth another watch. Francis Chan reminds us that we need to obey Jesus' command to make disciples, rather than just talk about it.

 **How NOT to Make Disciples – Francis Chan (1 min 52 sec)**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9KIA-DGx_3Y

WORSHIP

The Bible is clear that we can only live out a life of discipleship through the power of the Holy Spirit. We're going to spend some time asking for God's strength and wisdom to learn more about him and help others to learn more about him.

Using the Discipleship Prayer Handout, review the mission priority and reflect on what has been discussed in the session so far. Spend time as a group discussing and jotting down prayer points for each of the sections. The handout gives the group an opportunity to note prayer points for themselves, their church and our denomination.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Spend time as a group praying through the points on the handout. Remind the group that discipling others can only happen through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The following song can be used as part of this prayer time.

 **Holy Spirit – Bryan & Katie Torwalt (4 min 35 sec)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UyMNiCngHVU>

MISSION PRIORITY:
TO NURTURE DISCIPLES OF JESUS

'The future of The Salvation Army depends on nurturing current and future generations of Christian disciples who, filled by the Holy Spirit, share the Good News of Jesus, resulting in more disciples. Like athletes, Christian disciples need to practise staying fit for God's demanding mission. Habits such as prayer, Bible reading, corporate worship, music, tithing and helping others are vital. The Salvation Army believes being a disciple of Jesus and experiencing the blessing of holiness is the way to experience fullness of life.'

ME

MY CHURCH


MY DENOMINATION

GOD'S DEMANDING MISSION

In today's session we are looking at the resurrection story of Easter and exploring the disciples' response to God's demanding mission. As disciples of Jesus ourselves, we'll learn from their mistakes and take courage in their transformation from fear to faith.

WELCOME

Today's session should fall around Easter week. The Easter egg can represent the fertility of spring or the empty tomb of Christ's resurrection. Either way, Easter eggs have become a tradition at this time of year. Discover how to make Easter eggs by watching the clip carefully and see if you can answer the questions.

 **How to make Easter eggs – BBC Good Food (3 min 47 sec)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5CdXOJ4GT5M>

1. What is the name of the lady presenting the clip? – Miriam
2. Is she wearing earrings? – Yes
3. What does she use to clean out the chocolate egg moulds? – Cotton wool
4. What fraction of chocolate does she keep aside to add later? – a quarter
5. What method is used to melt the chocolate? – A bowl over a pan of simmering water
6. How does she cool the chocolate? – The remaining solid chocolate is added
7. What is the process of cooling the chocolate called? – Tempering
8. What colour is the thermometer? – Green
9. How long do the chocolate moulds go in the fridge to firm up? – 10 minutes
10. What does she use to melt the edges of the chocolate egg? – A hot baking tray

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Share the link with the group so that they can have a go at making their own Easter eggs. Alternatively, if you are meeting for a longer period of time, then you could have a go at making them together.

WORD

The 'Nurture Disciples of Jesus' mission priority says the following:

'Like athletes, Christian disciples need to practise staying fit for God's demanding mission.'

 What is God's demanding mission?

Today we'll spend time considering what our mission is, as disciples of Jesus, and look to Mark's account of the Easter story to consider our own response.

The book of Mark is widely believed to be the earliest Gospel written and formed the basis of Matthew and Luke. Watch the clip to get an overview of Mark's Gospel.

 **Mark – Bible Project (5 min 34 sec)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OVRixfameGY>


Have a look at the following Bible references.

Mark 1:40-45


Mark 5:35-43

Mark 3:7-12

Mark 8:27-30


 What does Jesus ask each person to do – or, more importantly, not to do?


It is not always the case, but there is a pattern throughout the Gospel of Mark where Jesus asks people to keep quiet about him.


 Why do you think that is?


Although additional sections may have been added to the Gospel of Mark, it's possible it originally ended at Mark 16:8.

 **Read Mark 16:1-8.**

 What is strange about this ending?

 Why do you think the women were afraid?

 Why was this the moment that they lost their courage?

 How do you think you would have reacted in their place?


The fact that the Gospel of Mark exists suggests that the early disciples did pursue God's demanding mission to 'go, tell'.

In her book *Journey to the Empty Tomb* Paula Gooder writes:

“Mark 16:8, with its unsatisfactory ending, issues the clearest invitation to us the readers to stop now being readers and to start being participants in the narrative. It invites us to pick up the story and to live out its ending in our own lives. The women were challenged to “Go, tell” and ran away. Today, we too are being challenged to “Go, tell”. The question is whether we too will run away for good, whether we will run away and return later, or even whether we might respond immediately (one of Mark’s favourite words) and run to share the Good News of Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour.”

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Read the additional ending to the Gospel of Mark (16:9-20).

 What additional information does it give us about God's demanding mission?

WITNESS

Paula Gooder mentions three main responses to God's demanding mission:


- * run away for good
- * run away and return later
- * run to share the Good News of Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour.


 Which response most represents your life as a follower of Jesus?

The fact that you are gathered together today demonstrates that the disciples, through the power of the Holy Spirit, took on the challenge of God's demanding mission.

Watch the clip and discuss the following question:

 In what way were the disciples transformed from fear to faith?



 What can we learn from their example?

 **What Happened to the Disciples of Jesus? (stop the clip at 3 min 13 sec)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Blaw240JeeA>

The disciples response of fear, found in the Gospel accounts of the resurrection, was transformed to a story of faith. As we move forward from this Easter time, let's step out in faith just like the disciples did.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY


-  What do you find most challenging about God's demanding mission?
-  What additional strength and wisdom do you need from God to overcome this challenge?

WORSHIP

We have concentrated on the disciples' response to the command to 'Go, tell' and considered our own response to that calling. In our worship time together let's reflect on what Jesus' sacrifice on the cross means for us and how the words 'He is risen' should impact every aspect of our lives.

 **Spoken Word: Risen, by Motion Worship (3 min 3 sec)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ItzONrc5wik>

-  As you reflect on the resurrection of Jesus, what one thing do you feel prompted to go and tell those around you?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Spend time reflecting on the resurrection of Jesus while listening to this medley of Easter songs. This is quite a long clip so you may want to share the link for the group to use in their own devotion time.




 **Resurrection Medley – Willow Worship Easter 2018 (9 min 28 sec)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=05LVkdMX7Kw>

GOOD HABITS

In Session Four we'll continue to explore the 'Nurture Disciples of Jesus' mission priority and what it means for us as followers of Jesus. The mission priority mentions several habits we can develop as part of our discipleship journey and today we will look at them in more detail.

WELCOME

-  Name a skill, hobby or sport that you are good at.
-  What kind of habits have you had to develop to improve in this area?
-  Have you ever achieved anything in this skill, hobby or sport? If so, what did it take to get to that point?


We often see the achievements of others and forget the hours of hard work and practice that went into their success. In order to grow and develop at anything, we need to establish good habits that strengthen our skills and understanding.

-  How do these principles apply to our growth and development as followers of Jesus?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Watch the clip and discuss the question.

https://www.eurosport.co.uk/swimming/tokyo-2020/2021/tokyo-2020-you-can-literally-achieve-anything-adam-peaty-on-the-hard-work-behind-gb-swimming-medal-rush_vid1516151/video.shtml

-  What 'good habits' can we pick up from the Gold medal-winning 4x100m mixed medley relay team?


WORD/WITNESS

For this session, the Word and Witness sections are combined to cover the habits suggested in the 'Nurture Disciples of Jesus' mission priority. The following sections can be used as applicable to your group. Depending on your group size, you may give smaller groups a topic to discuss and feed back on, or select habit discussions that will specifically develop your group. These activities are brief introductions to each habit but should start productive discussions and prompt the young people to explore some of them in more depth.


PRAYER

Explore the following Bible verses about prayer.



Colossians 4:2	Romans 12:12	Matthew 18:20	Acts 16:25
1 John 5:15	James 5:16	John 14:13	Acts 1:14

-  As you look at these verses, what do you discover about the importance of developing good prayer habits?

It may seem like an obvious statement, but prayer is an essential part of our lives as disciples.

-  What steps could you take to develop your individual prayer life?



Part of the 'Nurture Disciples of Jesus' mission priority is to support each other on our spiritual journey.

-  How often does your group pray together?
-  What steps can be taken to ensure that you regularly pray together, just like Jesus' disciples did?

BIBLE READING

Reading the Bible is one of the good habits mentioned in the 'Nurture Disciples of Jesus' mission priority.

Share as a group your current Bible reading habits.

-  What resources do you find useful?
-  What do you find challenging when it comes to reading your Bible?


 **Why Read the Bible? (2 min 12 secs)**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qlTHR_hqH9I

When talking of the importance of reading the Bible, Odd Thomas says:


“ ‘If you leave it to yourself, who knows what you’ll conjure up in your own mind.’

— ODD THOMAS

-  What do you think he means?

“ ‘My purpose in life is to love God, love people, and bring him glory. I know that purpose because he tells me that in the Scriptures.’

— ODD THOMAS



-  If Bible reading is such an essential part of our life as disciples, then how could you support each other to regularly dig deep into God’s word?

CORPORATE WORSHIP


Read through the article and explore some of the Bible verses included.

 **Why is corporate worship important? – Got Questions**

<https://www.gotquestions.org/corporate-worship.html>

-  What do you agree/disagree with?
-  How has corporate worship changed since the pandemic? Do you think these changes are a good/bad thing?


As you consider your personal beliefs about the importance of corporate worship, ask God to shine a light on your motivation for holding those opinions.

-  Does your viewpoint hold up to Biblical scrutiny?


MUSIC

Explore the following Bible verses about the use of music in worship.

Psalm 95:1	Hebrews 2:12	Psalm 71:23	Exodus 15:1
Psalm 105:2	Psalm 101:1	Colossians 3:16	Psalm 40:3

-  Do you think that music is an important habit to develop as a disciple of Jesus? Why or why not?

TITHING

-  What is tithing?

Watch the clip and discuss the questions.

 **What Does the Bible Say About Christian Tithing – GotQuestions.org (2 min 24 sec)**


https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X19whTt_aus

 What did you discover about tithing in this clip?

In 2 Corinthians 9:7 it says:

‘Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.’

— 2 CORINTHIANS 9:7

 Would you describe yourself as a cheerful giver? If not, why not?

Over the coming week, reflect on your personal giving and ask God to guide you where adjustments need to be made.

HELPING OTHERS

Mother Teresa dedicated her life to helping the poor in India. Read through some of her well-known sayings and discuss what her Christian example teaches you about helping others.

“ ‘Love cannot remain by itself – it has no meaning. Love has to be put into action, and that action is service.’

— MOTHER TERESA

“ ‘If you judge people, you have no time to love them.’


— MOTHER TERESA

“ ‘Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love.’

— MOTHER TERESA

“ ‘Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We only have today. Let us begin.’

— MOTHER TERESA


 When you think about your life of discipleship and the importance of developing a habit of helping others, what does ‘Let us begin’ look like for you?


SUMMARY

Ask the group to identify one key learning point from today’s discussion and share it with the rest of the group.

WORSHIP

Living a life of discipleship involves making choices and developing habits that show our love for Jesus. We are not working to get God’s approval, we are responding to his amazing love for us.

 As you reflect on the good habits we have discussed today, where has God developed and strengthened your faith?

 What areas of discipleship do you need to ask for God’s strength to develop?

 Does God have your heart, and if so, is this evident from the habits you are developing in your life?

Give the group time to focus on these questions as they listen to the music, and then give them an opportunity to share with the rest of the group.

▶ **Maverick City Music – Have my Heart (Lyric Video)**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E5qXXilr8NY>

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Spend time reflecting on the lyrics from today's song.

💬 Which line/s resonate with you today?

**My heart is yours completely
My heart is yours totally**

**You love with no reservations
You're not looking for perfection
And there's no need in me pretending
I'll give you everything
I'll give you everything, oh**

**You deserve my full attention
Nothing less than my devotion
Oh, speak to me and I will listen
I'll give you everything
I'll give you everything (lift it up)**

**Oh-oh, oh-oh-oh
You can have my heart (yes, you can)
(You can have my heart) Oh
Oh-oh, oh-oh-oh
You can (have my heart), you can
(You can have my heart)**

**Be the Lord of my emotions
Set me free from selfish motives
And search me 'til there's nothing hidden
And I'll give you everything (woo)
Yes, I'll give you everything**

— MAVERICK CITY MUSIC

NURTURE DISCIPLES OF JESUS

Our final session pulls together everything we have discovered as we have delved into the 'Nurture Disciples of Jesus' mission priority. Today we'll explore how Christians, like athletes, can stay fit for God's demanding mission and draw together our thoughts from the past four sessions.

WELCOME

The 'Nurture Disciples of Jesus' mission priority says:

'Like athletes, Christian disciples need to practise to stay fit for God's demanding mission.'

We've covered some heavy material over the past few sessions, so today we're going to take what we've learned and, hopefully, have some fun!

Whenever there is a film about a sporting triumph, it usually has something called a 'training montage'. The montage contains lots of clips of the athletes training for their event.

Watch the clip and jot down all elements of a great training montage.

The clip would need to start from 22 seconds to avoid an inappropriate phrase!

 **Cool Runnings – Training Montage (2 min 30 sec)**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oLeoUNd4YLk>

Example:



- * examples of the different exercises needed to improve
- * guidance and wisdom from a wise teacher
- * completion of a particularly difficult task – like climbing a mountain
- * motivational music
- * set in a range of locations to reflect the challenge ahead
- * development of individual skills

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Here are some additional examples of training montages that could be used with the group.



 **Rocky IV Training Montage (1985)**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wVP1wO_E4yk

 **Eddie the Eagle – Training Montage**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BgkLNOHd48Y&t=36s>

-  What are these training montages aiming to show within the storyline of the main character?
-  How do they inspire those watching?




WORD

Give the group the Athletic Scripture Verses handout and read through the verses together.

-  What parallels are there between the life of an athlete and the life of a Christian disciple?
-  Which Scripture verses illustrate that point most effectively for you?

Ask the group to imagine they are film directors and they need to create a training montage to reflect the journey of a Christian disciple.

Ask them to think of all the different 'exercises' the Christian would need to do to grow as a disciple.

-  What kind of wise teachers could they include?
-  What difficult task could be in the training montage to show progress?
-  What motivational music could they choose?

Give the group time to create a storyboard, mind map or montage plan. They could either do this as a whole group, or in smaller groups and feed back to everyone.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

If the group is feeling brave, and has the technical know-how, then you could film the montage clip and put it together with your choice of motivational music.

WITNESS

Over the last four sessions we have explored the third Mission Priority for the United Kingdom Territory. We have looked at what is meant by this mission priority and what it means for us as servants of Jesus.


Read The Salvation Army's statement to 'Nurture Disciples of Jesus'.

NURTURE DISCIPLES OF JESUS

The future of The Salvation Army depends on nurturing current and future generations of Christian disciples who, filled by the Holy Spirit, share the Good News of Jesus, resulting in more disciples. Like athletes, Christian disciples need to practise staying fit for God's demanding mission. Habits such as prayer, Bible reading, corporate worship, music, tithing and helping others are vital. The Salvation Army believes being a disciple of Jesus and experiencing the blessing of holiness is the way to experience fullness of life.



Revisit the original questions you generated in Session One. Work through each one and discuss it in light of all you have discovered in the past four sessions.

We are all part of The Salvation Army and play an important role nurturing disciples of Jesus and developing good habits on our discipleship journey. It's often easy to point out how our church or our denomination falls short, but the success of the mission of Jesus starts with us.

-  What are the practical steps you, your youth group, or your church could take to nurture disciples of Jesus?


WORSHIP

Today we have compared a life of discipleship to the life of an athlete.

-  What areas of 'training' does God need to develop in your life?
-  Who could you call on to help you?

 **Running the Race – 'I am a Disciple'**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWDa_7Q9ryI

'I will run with him. Will you?'

-  What is your response to the closing question from the clip?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Return to the Athletic Scripture Verses handout. Spend time reflecting on the verses.

Which one will you commit to memory to help you stay focused on you discipleship journey?

ATHLETIC SCRIPTURE VERSES

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize.

— 1 CORINTHIANS 9:24

**Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;
in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.**

— PROVERBS 3:5-6

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

— HEBREWS 12:1

He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.

Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.

They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

— ISAIAH 40:29-31

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.

— ROMANS 12:2

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being.

— EPHESIANS 3:16

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.

— JOSHUA 1:9

With your help I can advance against a troop; with my God I can scale a wall.

— PSALM 18:29

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

— MATTHEW 11:28

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

— 2 TIMOTHY 4:7